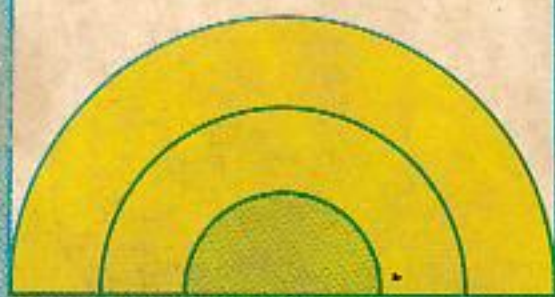




HUBERT and THE FORBIDDEN FRONTIER



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One day, Hubert decided to leave the city for some time. He took his tent, two blankets, his toiletry, a large sausage and two bottles of lemonade.

Having reached the outskirts of a great forest, he decided to set up his tent. Then, he lit a fire and cooked half of his sausage, after which he went to sleep.

The next morning, Hubert woke up at sunrise. All was quiet in the woods.

On an oak tree, however, the finch chorale was giving a concert, watched by a family of blackbirds and two fox-cubs.

Under a fern-leaf, a snail was doing his morning gymnastics. Three ants, dragging a load of supplies for the anthill, passed by shouting "Push-pull..."

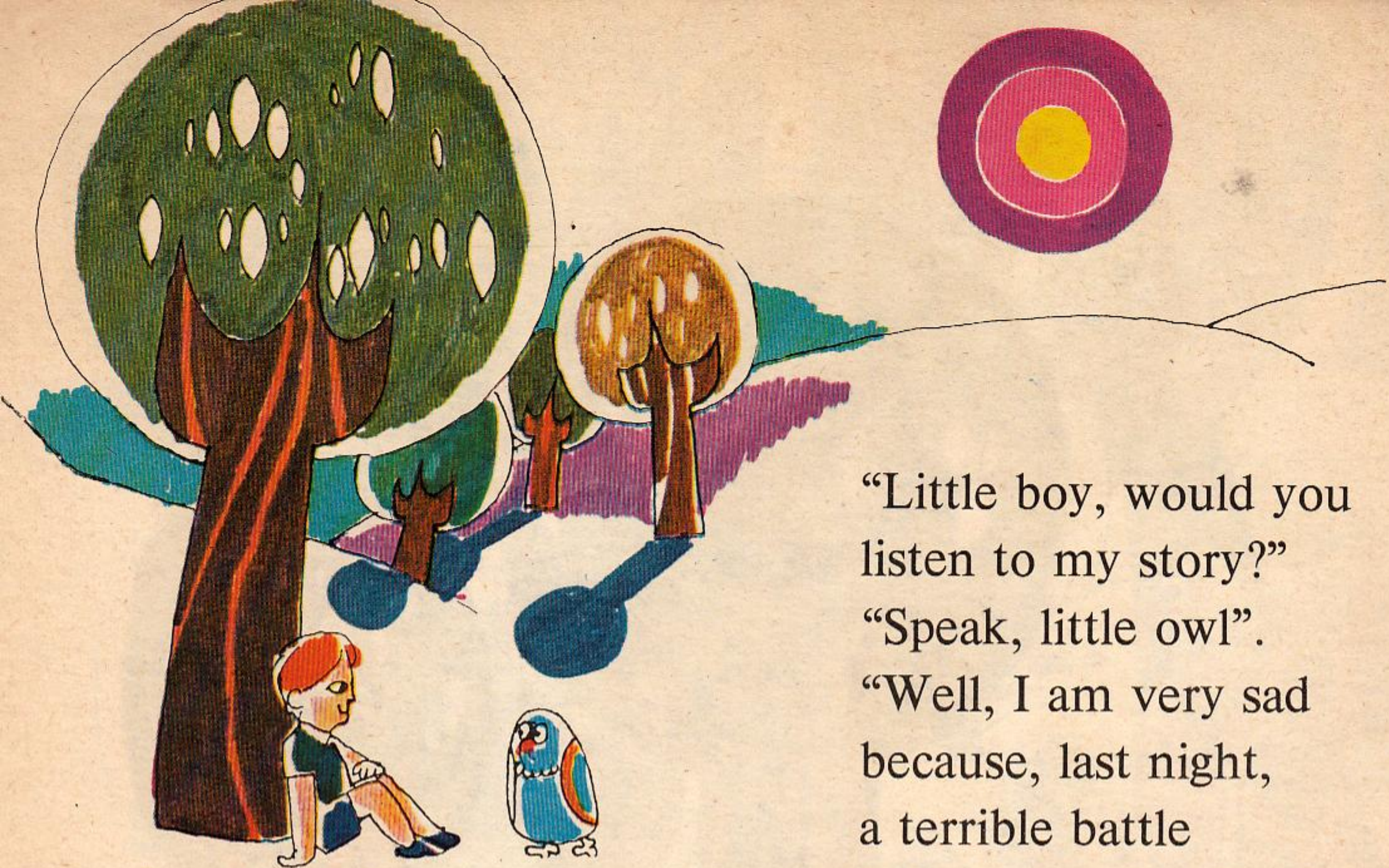
On a bed of pine-needles, a grasshopper and a frog were holding a jumping contest. The referee was a very talkative mushroom.



Hubert ran to the brook to wash up.
The water was cool, and our friend was soon
well awake. He was so happy that he whistled
joyfully. A blackbird, puzzled at first
by the new song, soon joined in and they gave
such a marvellous concert that the frog
and the grasshopper stopped jumping,
the ants dropped their burden,
and the mushroom was silent.



Hubert then left
for a long walk in the forest.
He was happy, free, the air was cool.
He liked looking at the leaves glowing
with bright colours in the morning sun.
However, Hubert did not notice the little owl
following him from branch to branch.
He was much too busy watching a lark,
rising in the skies, singing.
Suddenly, the little owl gathered
courage enough to leave his hiding place
and approached Hubert, who was sitting
at the foot of a tree to take a rest.



“Little boy, would you listen to my story?”

“Speak, little owl”.

“Well, I am very sad because, last night, a terrible battle

was fought between crows and owls. We used to be friends, but, just after sundown, a crow flew over our territory in violation of our mutual agreement.

Tonight, the council of the elders is meeting, and, if no one accepts to be a mediator, there will be war between crows and owls”.





“I understand”, Hubert exclaimed, “I have an idea, I am coming with you.”

And so, Hubert was seen following the little owl leading the way to his territory. A squirrel was so astonished that he almost fell from his branch. As for the finch, he choked with laughter.



That evening, the council of crows and owls assembled. Hubert spoke: "Dear friends, I know that men like to go to war, but I didn't realize that birds enjoyed the same pastime. You are fighting for so large a territory that you could never possibly hinder each other. I want to submit



you an arrangement which I trust will satisfy you. As owls work and play by night, while crows prefer to stay awake in daytime, you could very well share the same territory without ever seeing or bothering each other. And so, the forbidden frontier will no longer exist”.



That same night, a great feast was held for the new friend of the birds. After the customary speeches, in which owls and crows thanked Hubert for having so wisely advised them, the chief of the owls and the chief of the crows advanced to the center of the clearing, solemnly shook wings, swore to eliminate the forbidden frontier and never again to make war. Then, all rejoiced in a magnificent banquet and wild dances.



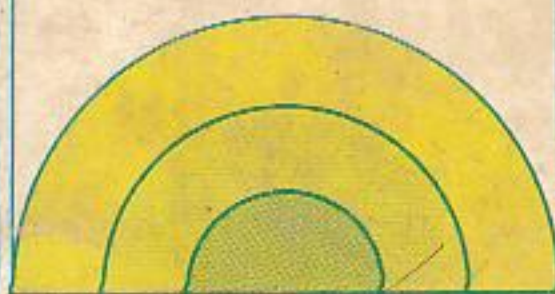
The sun had already set when Hubert returned to his tent. The little owl had come too, and the two friends swore never to part. Before going to sleep, Hubert remembered his marvellous day, and decided to come back and visit his forest friends every month. He could do so, now that the forbidden frontier was no more and that he was everyone's friend.



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- Pick the Squirrel
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- The Cat and the Nightingale
- The Sweeper of the Circus

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Printed by AL AHRAM Press — Cairo